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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer.

Let us pray:

We praise You, O God, for all of Your comings among us. You have excellent things to teach us, for Your wisdom is more valuable than rubies. Your power established the heavens and drew the horizon on the oceans.

Strengthen and encourage our Senators, giving them a sense of Your abiding presence. May they honor Your name in their thoughts, words, and actions. Give them compassion for the poor and helpless, and use them to rescue the perishing.

Bless our great land and make it a beacon of hope for our world. Give us the graciousness to serve one another in all humility, following Your example of sacrifice. Fill us with Your hope that we may celebrate now that glorious day when You will reign forever as Lord of all. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the pledge of allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 2 hours, the first 30 minutes under the control of the ma-

jority leader or his designee, the second 30 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee, the third 30 minutes under the control of the Senator from Arizona, Mr. McCain, and the final 30 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning there will be a 2-hour period for morning business. Following that time, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 5, the Class Action Fairness bill. As the majority leader noted last night, we made substantial progress on the bill yesterday. Senator FEINGOLD's amendment on remand limit is pending. It is our desire to have that vote around 12:30 or so today.

We will also need to dispose of the Durbin amendment on mass actions. I know that discussions continue with respect to that Durbin amendment.

We are not aware of any other amendments to be offered, and therefore it is hoped and expected that we can proceed to final passage of the class action bill at a reasonable hour this afternoon.

Finally, I would say that the two leaders are close to an agreement on the consideration of the Chertoff nomination for next week. We will lock in that unanimous consent at the first opportunity.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from South Dakota is recognized.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today for the first time as a Senator from the State of South Dakota. First and foremost, I thank the people of South Dakota for putting their trust in me, for sending me to fight for their values and to represent them here in Washington, DC.

I had the distinct pleasure of serving the State of South Dakota for three terms in the House of Representatives, and now I am looking forward to continuing my service to South Dakota and to our Nation here in the Senate. I decided to run for the Senate because I believe we can make better progress on an agenda that strengthens our Nation and increases the prosperity of every American. We have a lot of work to do, and we should not let partisanship or political gamesmanship get in the way of this agenda.

The Senate is known for its deliberative qualities, most commonly manifested through the right to free debate. This quality is part of the fiber of the Senate, part of the character that makes it one of the most august institutions in the world.

Some of the greatest debates in our Nation's history have taken place in this very Chamber, from the 19th century debates on slavery and the Republic to the 20th century debates on civil rights and Social Security. While there is time to debate, we all came here to solve problems, not pass them on to our children. I think I speak for many Members when I say that the only thing that sustains me when I am away from my children is the knowledge that we are improving their lives through our work. That is why I firmly

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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